



TECHNIQUEST

Design and creation of interactive exhibits and programmes

Children's Museum Jordan

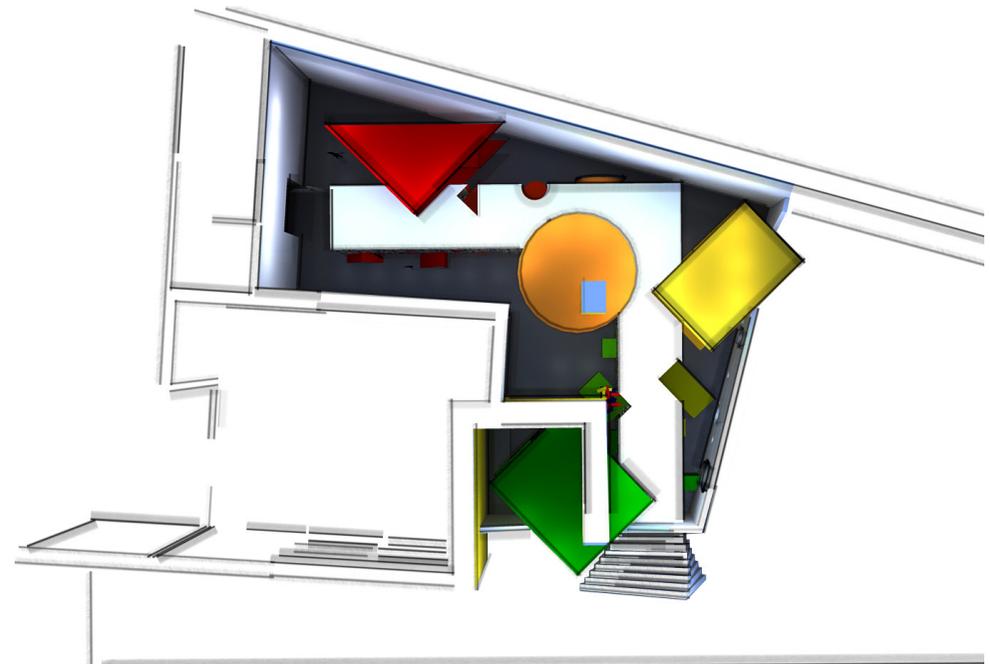
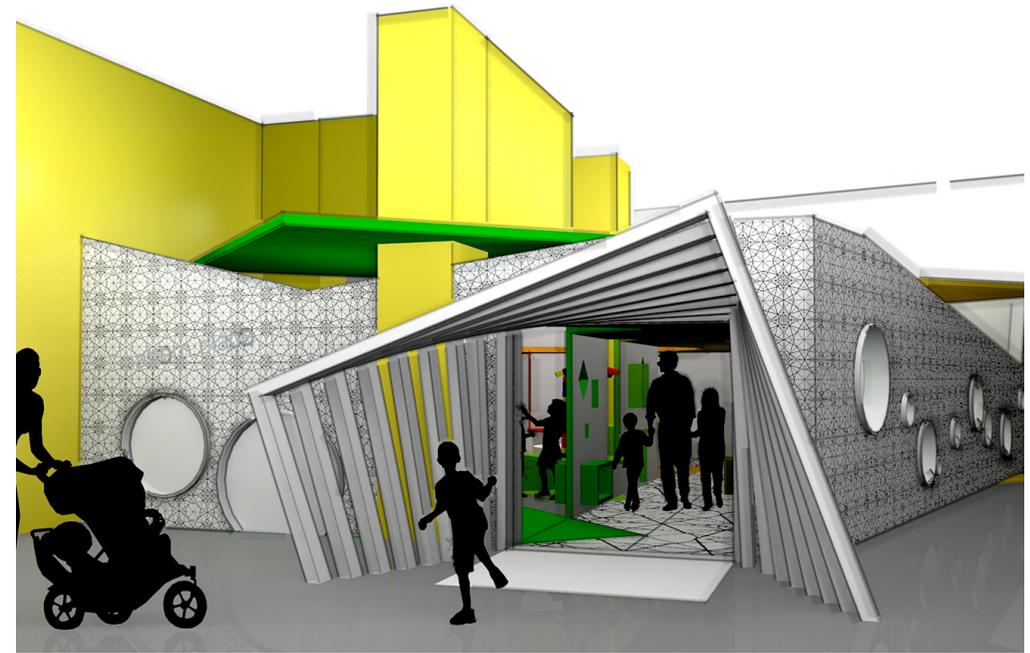
Once Upon a Shape

Project Review Oct '14

Once Upon a Shape

In July 2013 Techniquest, along with KCA London, successfully tendered to design and build an early childhood development exhibition for the Children's Museum Jordan. This project became Once Upon a Shape and was successfully opened by Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan in October 2014.

The response saw the team combine extensive exhibit development, 3D and 2D design, content and evaluation experience as well as world-class operational knowledge to deliver a proposal that was both 'of' and 'for' the children of Jordan as well as directly addressing the specific needs of this audience. Techniquest and KCA London achieved this by working in close partnership with the dynamic team at Children's Museum Jordan resulting in an iterative process that ensured each party was able to bring their particular skills and knowledge together to create a simple, united vision.

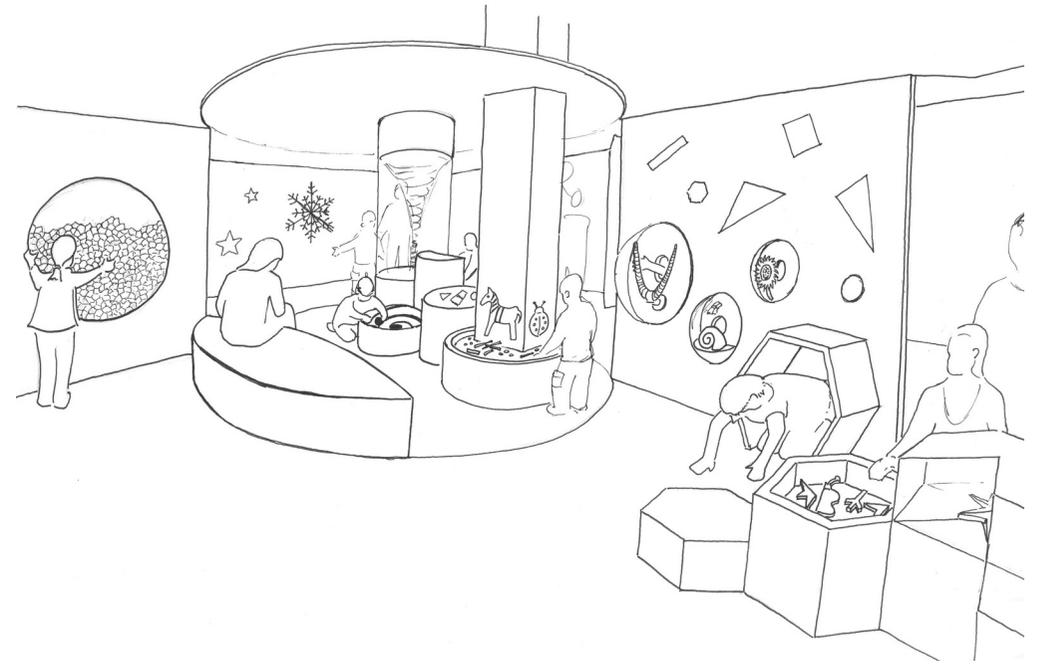


Pattern Play

Pattern Play became the working title, the vision, to stimulate children's inherent curiosity about how the world around them works. Firmly grounded in strong learning outcomes, and set within a tactile, sensory environment, Pattern Play became focused on providing opportunities for interaction, open-ended play and discovery.

The exhibition concepts centered on the theme of pattern and shape and saw the team attempt to give the space a distinct identity whilst adhering to the strong pre-existing design style of the Museum.

Working with the Children's Museum Jordan's Early Educational Guidelines Pattern Play sought to support the development of children's thinking skills, rather than didactically depositing information on them with a particular focus on exploration, critical analysis and communication.



Uniquely Jordanian

The theme of pattern meant that references to Jordanian wildlife, art and daily life could be seamlessly incorporated into the content, offering strong scaffolds to learning more abstract content. From the distinct patterns on a striped hyena to creating mosaics using tessellated shapes, through to familiar music and rhymes - real world experiences and examples were interpreted into playful activities and 3D installations to engage and encourage children to make links beyond their immediate exhibition experiences.

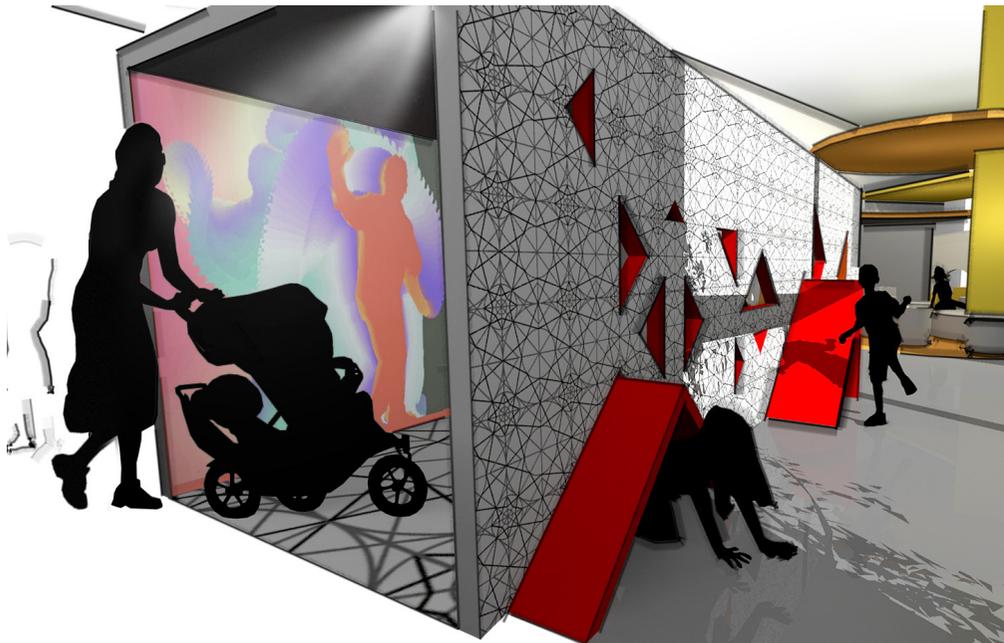
Learning Approaches

The exhibition provided opportunities to cover a broad range of learning styles, an essential aspect of the design and development process when paying particular attention to young audiences less focused on a linguistic style.

The cornerstones for the gallery would be:

- Linguistic
- Logical
- Spatial awareness and manipulation
- Musical
- Visual
- Bodily-kinesthetic
- Inter and intra-personal

Exhibit concepts were developed to ensure that the interactives were not only multisensory but also encouraged the user to access several learning styles at once.



Design Approach

Aesthetic inspiration was taken from the world in which we live including the natural world and its wildlife, weather and our environment. Patterns from the human body and the way that human bodies move were also an inspiration along with the shapes that we have created in our world through buildings and physical sciences.

Drawing on the richness of Middle Eastern design and architecture the team took its cue from the rich geometric patterns of Islamic design that can be seen in textile design and form a common artistic bond throughout the region.

The design intent was to create a gallery that was inspirational, tactile, varied in spaces and forms, informative, imaginative but above all fun and safe. A space that excites and plays with the senses, through sound, light, movement and texture.

Exhibits

Technique's experience of developing interactive exhibits for a range of audience's ensured that each exhibit concept was refined to allow for open-ended engagement, social play and prolonged engagement. Drawing on a combination of best practice from science centres around the world Technique was able to take a combination of existing exhibit concepts as well as bespoke exhibit ideas and mold them to best suit the audience, often refining user interfaces or manipulating scale to create bespoke installations for the gallery.

Air tables, illuminated bubble tubes, digital finger-painting, magnet walls, crawl tunnels, mazes and a building area ensured the space was diverse, vibrant and highly interactive.

Feely walls, object boxes and textured surfaces were used to add further depth to the space and reinforce the multisensory nature of the gallery.



Installation

Members from our Projects team, the group that designed and built the exhibits, travelled to Amman in September to complete the on-site works. Working with staff from Children's Museum Jordan the team finalised the ground works, completed fit-out of the space and installed all of the scenographic and interactive elements.

The result was a dynamic and vibrant space that lent heavily on the theme of shape whilst adhering to the learning outcomes that were set out in the original proposal. The gallery is in its infancy but, like its audience, will develop its own personality and identity.

